

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6404

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 4734

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, UNHCR, AR, CI

SUBJECT: CHILEAN MARIO MUNOZ SALAS SURFACES, REQUESTS RESETTLEMENT IN FRANCE THROUGH UNHCR

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 3754; (B) BUENOS AIRES 3234

1. MARIO MUNOZ SALAS, CHILEAN LABOR LEADER WHO FLED TO ARGENTINA FROM PINOCHET'S CHILE IN 1973 AND WHO WAS APPARENTLY HIDING FOR LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, APPEARED AT UNHCR OFFICES IN BUENOS AIRES FRIDAY NIGHT (JULY 16) TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE IN LEAVING THE COUNTRY, UNHCR DIRECTOR TOLD EMBOFF TODAY (JULY 19). UNHCR DIRECTOR AVOUCHED MUNOZ SALAS' IDENTITY AND SAID UNHCR HAD ASKED FRENCH EMBASSY TO EXPEDITE MUNOZ SALAS' RESETTLEMENT IN HIS CHOICE, FRANCE,

2. MUNOZ SALAS PROFESSED TO UNHCR DIRECTOR TO KNOW NOTHING ABOUT INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN HIS WELFARE (REF A) AND IS APPARENTLY UNPERTURBED ENOUGH TO ARRANGE HIS OWN ACCOMODATIONS IN BUENOS AIRES. HE TOLD UNHCR DIRECTOR THAT HE WAS PICKED UP RECENTLY IN MENDOZA BY ARGENTINE POLICE AND INTERROGATED FOR TWO DAYS THEN ROUTINELY RELEASED UNHARMED. UNHCR DIRECTOR MARVELED TO EMBOFF HOW ARGENTINE SECURITY FORCES COULD PICK UP AND LATER RELEASE MUNOZ SALAS, WHOSE LIFE WAS THOUGHT TO BE
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THREATENED BY GOA AND GOC SECURITY FORECES AND WHO WAS SUBJECT

OF WELL-PUBLICIZED INTERNATIONAL CONCERN AND NUMEROUS US CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRIES. (REF B). "EITHER IT SHOWS HOW POORLY CENTRALIZED AND COORDINATED THE ARGENTINE SECURITY FORCES ARE, OR THERE IS SOMETHING FUNNY GOING ON," THE UNHCR DIRECTOR REMARKED.

3. MUNOZ SALAS HAS APPARENTLY BEEN IN MENDOZA WHERE HIS WIFE, FIVE CHILDREN AND FOUR DEPENDENTS ARE LIVING. UNHCR DIRECTOR SAID HE EXPECTS FRANCE WILL QUICKLY ACCEPT MUNOZ SALAS FOR RESETTLEMENT AND THAT HIS FAMILY WILL PROBABLY FOLLOW. THIS INFORMATION HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC.
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